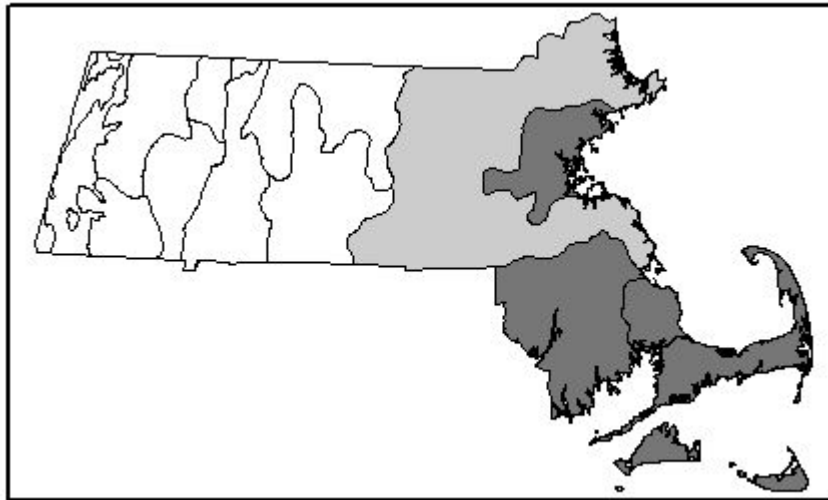


**Community Name:** MARINE SUBTIDAL: FLATS

**Community CODE:** CM1A000000

**SRANK:** S4



**Concept:** Sparsely to densely vegetated communities, dominated by invertebrates. Permanently submerged saline communities that occur in open ocean or near shore.

**Environmental setting:** Permanently flooded by ocean water. Sandy to muddy nearshore shallow water and offshore banks.

**Vegetation Description:** May include beds of eelgrass (*Zostera marina*). Other plants are macro- and micro-algae.

**Associations:**

**Habitat Values for Associated Fauna:** Water over flats are important feeding areas for gulls, terns, diving ducks, and other water birds, and many winter in Massachusetts waters feeding on eelgrass and/or the fish in it. Brandt (*Branta bernicla*) are particularly dependent on four foot deep eelgrass, and feed on it in Massachusetts waters in the winter. Eelgrass beds are key nursery areas for larval and juvenile fish. Loggerheads (*Caretta caretta*) and Atlantic Ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*) sea turtles use deep Marine Subtidal Flats in Cape Cod Bay.

**Associated rare plants:**

NONE KNOWN

**Associated rare animals:**

CARETTA CARETTA	LOGGERHEAD	T
LEPIDOCHELYS KEMPII	ATLANTIC RIDLEY	E

**Examples with Public Access:** Billingsgate Shoals Wildlife Sanctuary, Wellfleet.

**Threats:**

**Management needs:**

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Synonyms**

**USNVC/TNC:** Includes: *Zostera marina* Permanently flooded - Tidal Herbaceous Alliance -- *Zostera marina* Herbaceous Vegetation [Provisional] [CEGL004336].

**MA (old name):** Southern New England & Gulf of Maine Saline/ Brackish Subtidal Estuarine Community.

**ME:** Marine - Mud bottom community.

**NH:** Possible, not described.

**NY:** Includes Marine eelgrass meadow.

**CT:** Includes *Zostera marina* Hydromorphic Vegetation.

**RI:** Brackish intertidal mud flat.

**Other:**

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**Date:** 1/1/00